

Bartram's Covered Bridge
Over Crum Creek,
South of Chester County Road
15098
Newtown Square vicinity,
Chester-Delaware Counties
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1108

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington Planning and Service Center
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

BARTRAM'S COVERED BRIDGE

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Location: Over Crum Creek, South of Chester County Road #15098, Newtown Square vicinity, Chester-Delaware Counties, Pennsylvania. /Reference: Map of Chester County (by Chester County Commissioners) 1956/.

Present Owner: Chester County and Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

Statement of Significance: This simple covered bridge, erected in 1860, is one of the few covered bridges left in Chester County and is the only one scheduled for preservation.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Counties of Chester and Delaware, Pennsylvania (bridge spans creek between Willis-town Township, Chester County, and Newtown Township, Delaware County).
2. Date of erection: 1860.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.: Architect unknown. Contractor was Ferdinand Wood at cost of \$1133.
4. Original plans, construction etc.: Not located.
5. Alterations and additions: In 1940 the Commissioners of the two counties built a new concrete bridge across Crum Creek at this point and the old covered bridge was moved a bit to the south, and its preservation is being undertaken by the two counties.
6. Important old views and references:
 - a. Views: None known.
 - b. References: Sources of information, to be found in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa. - Classified printed and manuscript files under the heading: Bridges - Crum Creek.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

This is the only covered bridge in the county that is scheduled for preservation. Of the many that were built in the 19th century, only about twenty are left.

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

None known.

D. Supplemental Material:

1. Copied from Road Dockets, Clerk of Courts Office, Chester County Courthouse, West Chester, Pa.:

Docket J. p. 566
Bridge over Crum Creek
At Haverford Ford
in Willistown

"We the persons appointed by the respective Courts of Quarter Sessions, of Chester and Delaware Counties having all met according to notice duly given, and after being severally affirmed according to law did view the place proposed for a Bridge over Crum Creek, on the line dividing the said Counties,; and near the dwelling house of Israel L. Bartram as in the within order mentioned, and are of the opinion that a Bridge at the place desired by the petitioners (to wit, at the place where the road as hereinafter changed will cross the said creek) is indispensably necessary, and that the said bridge will be too expensive for the adjoining townships of Willistown and Newtown, within which the site of the said Bridge is situated, to bear. And we further report, that in our opinion the following changes in the course or bed of the Harford road to be connected with the said bridge will be necessary in order to the erection of the same at the most suitable place at the least expense and in the best manner to wit: Beginning at a point in the "Boot" road, and North sixty Seven and a quarter degrees West, twenty-eight perches and two tenths from the present intersection of said roads and South eleven and a half degrees East, seventeen feet seven inches from a marked Hickory tree, thence through woodland of the said Bartram, East twelve perches and half to the middle of Crum Creek, being the line dividing Chester and Delaware Counties, thence through land of Eli Lewis and in Delaware County continuing the same land (it being cleared land) the four following courses and distances, viz: North eighty-two degrees East, one hundred and three perches and sixteen hundreths to a stake near a small run, thence South eighty eight degrees East, twelve perches, and South Eighty degrees and a quarter East, fifty-six perches to a stake, and North eighty degrees East, forty five perches and two tenths to a stake, thence through woodland of David Caley, South Sixty-five degrees and a quarter East, twenty-two perches, thence through woodland of Sidney Lewis, and continuing the same course, thirty-four perches to the middle of the Harford road aforesaid. A plot or draft whereof is herewith annexed.

"We are also of the opinion that so much of the present Harford as may be supplied by this change shall be vacated.

"Witness our hands this Fourth day of the First Month
A. D. 1860

John Mendenhall)		Abraham Bailly)	
Edward B. Green(	Delaware	Alban Webb (	Chester
Hickman Myers (	County	Wm. W. Parker)	County
Jacob Smedley)			

"And we further report, that no damages are claimed by any party in this County, through whose land the road as hereinbefore changed shall pass.

"Witness our hands this Fourth day of the First Month,
A. D. 1860

John Mendenhall)		Abraham Bailly)	
Edward B. Green(	Delaware	Alban Webb (	Chester
Hickman Myers (	County	Wm. W. Parker)	County
Jacob Smedley)			

January 30, 1860 Read and Confirmed nisi
Feb. 1, 1860 Change in route of road approved of by
Commissioners
Feb. 3, 1860 Report concurred in by Grand Jury

2. Papers and references to "Bartram's covered bridge over Crum Creek on the Chester-Delaware county line."

"Clerks of Courts Office, Chester County court house, West Chester, Pa.

Bridge Papers Vol. 6 #85

Petition filed Oct. 10, 1859
Petition filed Nov. 16, 1859 (too great expense for township)
Order to view filed Nov. 16, 1859
Report of view 4th of 1st mo. 1860 (gives plot of location)
Petition for jury to inspect filed Sept. 19, 1860
Appointment of jury to inspect filed Sept. 19, 1860
View. asks for reduction to \$1058 - not in accordance
with specifications

Commissioners' vault, Chester County court house, West Chester, Pa.

Commissioners' minutes

April 13, 1860. met with commissioners of Delaware Co.
about a bridge at said location. adopted
specifications.

April 16, 1860. advertised for bids
May 7, 1860. 10 proposals for bridge. contract awarded
to Ferdinand Wood for \$1133
Nov. 15, 1860. commissioners went to inspect
Dec. 11, 1860. commissioners requested Delaware County
commissioners to meet them to settle for
bridge
Dec. 20. went to Delaware County and settled.

County Surveyor's Office, court house annex, West Chester, Pa.

Bridge record page 143 #159

Covered wooden bridge Inter County Bridge
Over crum Creek at Israel Bartram's Mill on the line of
Delaware County in Willistown Twp. on the road from White
Horse to Newtown Square, length of span 60 ft. extending
10 ft. over each abutment. Total length 80 ft. roadway
13 ft. Built 1860 by Ferd. Wood \$1133. One half of
which was paid by Delaware Co."

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This old covered bridge was preserved and moved a bit to the south when it was replaced in 1940 by a new concrete one.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Frame bridge, one level; 81' long and 17' wide.
2. Foundations: The foundations are of stone supporting the superstructure of wood. The unit of construction is two wooden arches, one on each side extending almost the full length. It is an integral part of the wall, carrying the weight and thrust of the superstructure to the stone foundations on the banks.
3. Wall construction: Wooden boards in a very slight shingle pattern.
4. Chimneys: None.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: No doors.

- b. Windows and shutters: On both sides the top section is open directly under the roof. The opening is approximately four boards in width and extends the entire length. There are also two window-like openings on each side at about midway between the ends and located at the floor level.

6. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Low pitch, wood shingle roof.
- b. Cornice, eaves: There is no formal cornice but the roof extends slightly over the wall in order to form a protecting eave.
- c. Dormers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor Plans: Simple covered bridge with enough space for single vehicle.
- 2. Stairways: None.
- 3. Flooring: Probably replaced several times.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finish: No finish, other than plaster.
- 5. Doorways and doors: Open at each end.
- 6. Trim: What little there is seems original.

D. Site:

General setting and orientation: Bridge runs east to west over Crum Creek, a few feet south of route 15098 which used to pass over it.

Prepared by Bart Anderson
Curator, Chester County
Historical Society
August 1958